

Center for Irish Partnerships
Report on visit to the National University of Ireland Galway
March 5, 2010 – March 10, 2010
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Introduction

In February, Professor William Mass of the RESDE department inquired as to whether it would be fruitful to have me accompany him to Galway for a presentation that he was invited to deliver by the National University at Galway. The trip was initiated by a national group of research institutes and government officials focused on economic cluster policy analysis. The hosts and collaborators were from the Centre for Innovation & Structural Change (CISC), J.E. Cairnes School of Business and Economics, at NUIG. Dr. Paul Ryan of CISC had visited Lowell in October and was our guest at a reception held at Allen House for the US-Ireland Emerging Technology Conference. CISC is the data repository of a national consortium of research institutes focused on economic cluster analysis and policy formulation. Bill Mass was hopeful of a contract and ongoing collaboration. Among the collaborators was a former RESD graduate Oner Tulum who has been working as a post-doc fellow at CISC (he was extremely helpful in organizing my schedule). Among the various applications demonstrated by Bill in his presentation was a visualization of the locations of every medical device company in Ireland from data my collaborators at CISC had supplied, to show how the software is an aid to economic cluster policy analysis. The presentation went well, and was well attended. U Mass Lowell Computer Science Post doc Andy Dutilie accompanied Bill and did good work in support at the presentation as well.

Exploring possible collaborations in other areas

With no prior relationships with NUIG, it was a challenge to arrange meaningful face to face meetings with persons engaged in research and teaching that might match up well with U Mass Lowell. Nonetheless, in a short time I was able, with generous help of RESDE alum and Galway Post doc Oner Tulum, to put a series of meetings together with University faculty and administration to both promote UML and Lowell in terms I thought relevant to the person, and to ascertain what programs, activities, centers, etc. that we have that might be of interest to NUI Galway.

Business programs

It was clear that the Business school and administration were interested in our Business programming, specifically our MBA, both live coursework and online. Deputy President James Ward and the Director of their Center for Innovation and Structural Change (CISC) James Cunningham indicated that while the research capabilities at Galway were very good; they were somewhat deficient in the variety of graduate level coursework. This is also true in their biology and engineering graduate programs. We discussed the possibility of NUIG students doing coursework at U Mass Lowell, live on campus and online in conjunction with our College of Management.

Medical Device development

Galway is one of the centers, if not *the* center of the Irish medical device industry. Learning how to work with the local companies in product development and technology transfer is of great interest to the relevant faculty and staff. Peter McHugh is the Head of the Bio-Medical Engineering department and showed great interest in our experience with M2D2 and other Lowell efforts.

A visit by Steve McCarthy could prove fruitful in creating relationships not only between the two Universities, but also between local medical device startup companies on both sides of the Atlantic.

Lasers

A third possible area of opportunity is in lasers. Galway has the National Centre for Laser Applications, and their Director Tom Glynn, with whom I met, noted the applications for laser research in bio-medical engineering among others. I likewise shared the M2D2 model with him as well.

Conference Participation

I think that if we do an Emerging Tech Conference again in 2010, as Steve has discussed with our existing Irish partners, we might invite two or three key Galway faculty to it. I hinted at it, and they seemed quite interested.